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THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN GIRLS' EDUCATION *

The poet Cowper, satirizing the degeneracy of his age, and striving to set forth in impressive climax the several follies of the world around him, reserves for a final and conclusive touch this withering couplet, beyond which the force of satire could no further go:

While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
Seems verging fast towards the female side.

Thus does the poet, intending a sneer, build better than he knows, and give us a text that seems a prophecy. Dependent all his life upon the tender offices of women, and requiting this tenderness in the most touching verse; elevated by all his instincts and his weaknesses, as well as by his intellectual insight, above the possibility of holding the Miltonic view of woman, Cowper yet found it surpassingly ridiculous that woman should take to what he calls "learning." This was the eighteenth century way of looking at female education.

Since the inmates of that now bleak looking house in Olney village stirred the fire on a winter evening, closed the shutters fast, let fall the curtains and wheeled the sofa round, a wonderful century has elapsed, in which the world has changed as never before in a similar period, and the thoughts of men have broadened with conceptions never dreamed by other generations. Nineteenth century self laudation is a much worn theme, now profitless and useless; and I enter upon it only to suggest the query whether

* An address before a conference of teachers held under the auspices of the Women's college connected with Brown University.

our astonishing hundred years has anything to show in social development more astonishing than the new ideas, with which we are now so familiar that they have become already almost commonplace, concerning the sphere, the capacities, the rights, the education, of women. The pioneer work is done: organization, perfection, fruition alone remain. There is no more to plead for,—I except, of course, the perennial pleading that all educational institutions, the most insatiate of modern mendicants, have to practise to keep up with the enlargement of ambitions and the growth of social needs. Minds are prepared: and this is the whole battle. Conviction is full grown.

That women are to be educated is now, not conceded, but insisted on as a primary duty,—a duty as obvious and exacting, as completely beyond all question as to its reality, as the education of men. And the problems of women's education are henceforth precisely parallel with the problems of men's education,—not the same as these, but of the same nature, resting on the same social presuppositions and involving the same view of life and its duties and responsibilities. These problems of female education are both interesting and pressing; interesting because they suggest new queries of sexual psychology and foreshadow the necessity of recasting some of the old educational conceptions, to which the long adjustment of procedures to the requirements of the other sex had brought the general pedagogic consciousness; and pressing, because the girls are here, waiting, anxious, determined, needing and deserving the best.

Wisely to settle the problems of women's education is the paramount duty of the hour. Like the boys, the girls have their living to earn: they too have life before them: they too imagine careers. If a girl's will is not exactly the wind's will, her thoughts none the less are long, long thoughts. The girl of to-day no longer seeks an education as an ornament, as a mere addition to her personal attractions. She connects her education with her coming life of service to humanity. She wonders and asks whether this or that will be most useful to her if she teaches, if she writes in an office, if she studies medicine, if she learns nursing, if she learns a handicraft. Is not this new burden of responsibility, resting on the minds of the girls, an infinitely pathetic thing? A boy, if worst comes to worst, will elbow his way some-

how: but what shall a girl do? She seeks advice; she is happy to be told, and never doubts your wisdom. Who can be a teacher of girls and not feel a certain awe in view of the unskeptical spirit with which he is met,—the entire belief of his pupils that all he says is true and important? What such teacher can avoid the feeling that it is sacredly incumbent on him to see to it that his utterances shall be so judicious, so grounded in honest conviction, so elevated above mere formalism, that they shall actually be true and important?

He who has to advise young women as to intended occupations is often tempted to look upon the women only as more young men, of opportunity still somewhat restricted, lacking somewhat in force and push; and is pretty sure to recommend to them the old courses of study that were made solely for men, and which, being already at hand ready made, obviate the necessity for thinking. Nor indeed is it possible to strike off at once a new plan that shall meet all the needs of a complicated situation, like that which confronts us at this moment in women's education. The easiest mode of procedure is to assume at the outset that women do not differ from men, and that accordingly all that is necessary is for the old institutions, as the phrase is, to throw open their doors to the sex,—and all is done. But this easiest way, I submit to you without the least misgiving, is also the way of consummate unwisdom. Most educational problems are intricate, and have to be worked out elaborately through all their perplexities. In education always distrust the seer, who tosses off an Orphic saying and then goes his way, leaving you to apply his oracle to the concrete cases.

The profoundest and most pervasive fact of anthropology is the difference of sex. No other fact of human nature so colors life in all its aspects, so shapes manners and customs, so determines our very civilization. And education, which is only in part a natural and organic growth, beyond the reach of our wills, and in its other part is an institution, created by our volitions and votes,—education, instead of standing aloof from this great fact of sex diversity, instead of pretending to solve the sex problems by denying their existence, must ever keep in mind this cardinal principle of the duality of human nature,—the division of mankind into men and women.

Like male education, female education must consider the *what* and the *how*: what sciences, what arts, shall we teach, and how shall we teach them. What knowledge will be most useful to a woman; what accomplishments, what acquired skill, should she especially possess? Then what scholastic procedures are the best fitted for stimulating, interesting, and instructing young women's minds? The questions are indeed ancient, familiar to the comedy and the satire, no less than to the social philosophy, of all ages: but they have new bearings to-day, and must be discussed as if they were wholly modern.

Probably there will be but little dissent among educators from the thesis that I offer for your consideration, that literature deserves in the education of women a larger place than it has hitherto held in the education of men. Or let me rather say,—literature and history; for as history proper is the record of men acting in the state and evolving political and social institutions, so literature is the record of men thinking and feeling, provided the record has taken beautiful and noble form, and allures later generations by virtue of its power to move the heart and elevate the mind. Because I speak especially in behalf of history and literature, do not imagine me as implying detraction from other great sources of womanly culture, such as astronomy, botany, chemistry, and even pure linguistics. Among all the branches of our organized education for women the primacy belongs to literature.

For woman is peculiarly endowed with the qualities to which good literature makes its appeal. Literature, remember, is the record of thought or emotion, expressed with such charm of rhythm, or with such felicity of phrase and such power of style, that it continues to awaken sympathy in following generations, and becomes a recognized national possession. What the Anglo-Saxon branch of the great Aryan family essentially is, is reflected in its literature; that is to say, in English literature. How to bring the individual mind into closest touch with the great national mind is the problem of problems in national education. To understand America, for example, we must understand English puritanism; and to understand English puritanism, we must not merely read the chronicle of seventeenth century events, but must chiefly study the great literary art of that period,—as in *Comus*,—and the popular religious fervor of the time, as in *Pilgrim's*

Progress. To know what happened, to know why this happened, and then to know what were the feelings of men in view of these happenings,—this constitutes historical knowledge. And the feminine way of proceeding to the acquisition of this knowledge is to begin with the literary, the artistic, the emotional, end. To begin by studying the phenomenon, and then to amuse one's self by viewing the reflection of the phenomenon in the mirror of literature, may indeed be the more virile way, but is not a nobler or a more philosophical way than it is first to enter into the emotions that wrought in souls at a given crisis, and thence to go on to investigate the history of the crisis. Such an utterance as Marvell's stanzas, written the next year after the dread scene at Whitehall,—

He nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;
Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed,—

is not to be viewed as a mere by-product of the time,—as a piece of literary flotsam, caught and preserved by the curiosity of scholars; but rather as a key to unlock to us the very minds and hearts of the men who were enacting one of the great scenes in the drama of English history.

Literature depends altogether on its form, as we know that formless composition perishes. The mystery of form in literature, whether of verse or of prose, is the very mystery of its vitality, its immortality. Now women have preëminently the sense of form. Who that has read some thousands of girls' compositions, but knows this to be so, and knows, besides, that this sense of form, this love for things cosmic, orderly, becoming, turns with delight to the harmonies and graces of form in literary expression? I doubt not but it is right to do as in men's colleges is sometimes done for men, namely, to have daily compositions, paragraphs on divers topics, hurried writing on the spur of the moment, as if a printer were clamoring for copy. This of course is formless composition, fugitive or newspaper composition, good in its way; and the way is by no means always bad, considering the exigencies of

our feverish life. But it is not the girl's way. It took me some years to find out that when a girl wants ten or fifteen pages,—say 2,500 words,—for her composition, she wants it for a good purpose, and must not be chidden for the apparent largeness of her plans. She has seen her theme through as a unit, and cannot break it as if it were an amorphous commodity of which more or less could be measured out according to demand. I have come greatly to respect the girls' sense of form, and to consider it as one of the chief foundation stones in the structure of my teaching.

By form in literature I would not be understood as meaning merely the rhythmic and metric qualities of prose or verse, but all that ordering of the content of a literary product by virtue of which it gets elevation of tone and artistic unity, so that it vibrates, as it were, in harmony with the human mind and creates a single impression. Some great works are simply massive, like the *Excursion* and the *Task*, whose unity is nothing more than their consistent continuity. Such creations may abound in beauties, and may be broken into fragments, some of which may severally possess structural unity as poems. But the greatest works of poetic art, such as *Hamlet*, *Lear*, the *Tempest*, *Comus*, *Paradise Lost*, the *Ancient Mariner*, the *Eve of St. Agnes*, have obvious structure, a perceptible making and fulfilment of a promise, an evolution of a theme; and bring us at the end around again to the beginning. These works are not massive, but organic: they cannot be maimed and live. This higher unity is not necessary to a certain kind of interest,—to interest, indeed, of a very high order: but so important is it in the great works of literature, that it constitutes their chief title to our supreme regard. Hence, while we teach literature with reference to its historical setting, and strive to explain its phenomena by tracing their genesis in antecedent phenomena, we must consider the poet as an original creator, and give large space to the study of his art. This study is peculiarly interesting to young women. For young women have infinite curiosity, and love to find things. To direct female curiosity in the best channels is a function of pedagogy. If the thing to be found is a little elusive, and is not given with absurd immediateness and downrightness in some books, girls will search and surmise with tireless patience. And this is one phase of the study of literature,—searching and surmising, forming theories

and getting evidence. In school or college minds will enjoy the advantage of contagion of zeal. Girls love to report successes and to admire classmates more successful than themselves.

To understand and feel the difference between the presence and the absence of artistic unity of structure in literature, the girl must of course have outgrown her girlhood and become a woman. This change however takes place in the feminine mind early, and it takes place obviously and almost suddenly. In a high school the girls are on both sides of the line; just as in a college for young men the young men are on both sides of the line, and half of them are boys. With girls the transition period is brief. When this change takes place, secondary, or middle, education ceases, and tertiary, or higher, education begins. However we organize our middle schools, by whatever nomenclature we indicate our divisions, we are really, in a high school for girls, with somewhat less than a half of our pupils, engaged in the higher education. The implications of this momentous fact we do not yet sufficiently recognize. Our rigid courses of study, our systems of examining and marking, our still extant college admission examination, are things to weep over, so little relation have they to the needs of youthful minds. The problem should be, to give to the young women freedom and responsibility. If you are afraid to give to a young man intellectual freedom, you need not be afraid to give it to a young woman. The tradition requires that in a school called secondary the discipline throughout shall be a secondary discipline. The situation has marked infelicities, injurious to the best interests of our older pupils. Until immense discussion shall have resulted in some radical changes in the organization and discipline of the high schools, the individual teachers must do within their little provinces what they may see the way to do, so to color and temper and qualify their instruction as to make it realize the possibilities of minds expanded with new powers, new ambitions, new hopes. For accomplishing this object I see no opportunity quite so favorable as that which offers itself in the higher study of literature; and of this higher study of literature, the study of literary art is perhaps the most available element.

Literary form we are wont to associate chiefly with verse, and with the rhythmic artifices by which verse enters into the soul

and beats with the pulses of life. In a course of literature for young women poetics should be a distinct category; and under poetics the subject of metric should be included as a most important sub-division. No one rightly appreciates pure poetry who studies it chiefly for the sake of its content. Lyric verse is little else than form. Consider the libretto of an air from an opera: whether it is beautiful and captivating: go still further, and translate the libretto into prose, and what have you left. The lyric is the air sung with the accompaniment of instruments and the enhancement of scenery. The lyric is not an essay, an argument, a lesson. This is to say that pure poetry is almost pure form. From lyric poetry downward form diminishes in relative importance; but it dominates all poetry still, even satire and didactic verse, and even the monotonous heroic-couplet products of the eighteenth century. These form effects determine the witchery, the magic, the significance of verse. It seems a matter for regret that it should be necessary to say these elementary things about poetry, but anyone who has observed the school ritual named the teaching of literature knows that is necessary.

Girls, in their riper school and college years, find infinite satisfaction in the study of metric forms. Children's minds seem to be almost invariably blighted and darkened with regard to poetic effects by the mistaken ideas which prevail in the lower schools concerning the teaching of reading. The teaching in these schools is evidently hard and intellectual, respecting solely the thought of poetry, and bent on logical expression and all possible annihilation of the music of the verse. Very young children fall into line and keep step to the rhythmic beat. I believe our teachers are prejudiced against this natural and proper metrical delivery of verse, and repress it as childish. Somewhere, certainly, between the earliest years and the secondary ones, naturalness has been extirpated, and the girls, though they can dance and sing, can no longer chant Shakespeare's and Milton's iambics, and modulate their voices to the poetic measures. That is, they can read verse with surrender to its music only after certain old and fixed school prepossessions have been with difficulty and much patience cleared from their minds. To break up, in the coming generation of women teachers, the habit of hard, prosaic, metre-denying reading of poetry, is a great function of the higher teaching

of literature. And the means by which we are to fulfil this function is chiefly the study of metric forms. The wrong way to proceed with this subject is to get a text-book and learn some lessons and then to have an examination. Everything natural and spontaneous dies under the upas tree of the text-book and the examination. Given the multifarious literature, let the girls search for special metric shapings and effects, collecting examples, observing as they do in the laboratory in the good modern teaching of physics, and finally trying to surmise laws. Above all things, let them read poetry as Tennyson notably read his own verses, with voice modulated, elevated, above the commonplace of every day. The girl must come to love the iambic line as she does a beautiful vase, and be as unwilling to break the one as the other.

In her study of poetics let the girl set on foot inquiries into the nature of poetry. Not by any means that she is to begin with a definition of poetry made by an educational seer, and thence to philosophize through the intricacies of a learned terminology. That would be the easy, indolent way, the way of routine. The natural way to study poetry is to begin with poems. When the girl has passed into the stage of the higher education, she should be led to compare instances, with the view to infer principles. The perception that there are common principles underlying all poetry comes at last to dawn upon the mind and gradually to acquire distinctness; so as ultimately to become the foundation of taste and to serve as a standard of judgment. Before the concrete case demanding decision, helpless is the memory stored with maxims and formulas. The academic bias favors those short cuts and shrewd devices which will prepare for impending examinations, thus ignoring psychological laws out of deference to the majesty of the scholastic mechanism. If I have any pedagogic conviction more especially rooted in my philosophy than any other, it is this;—that a moral or æsthetic principle cannot be effectually communicated *ab extra*, but must be grown up to by innumerable accretions of insight. Each mind must earn for itself the right of possession by going laboriously through the long process of acquisition, and cannot possibly purchase this right neatly wrapped up in the chapters of text-books. A multitude of isolated impressions must merge into such a whole of perception and comprehension as the individual mind is capable

of entertaining. The teacher is not responsible for the capacity of minds; but he is responsible for leading minds in the right way: it is for him to create the grand opportunity and then to inspire motives.

The grand opportunity in the study of literature implies, first, access to books and time to read: secondly it implies guidance and suggestion by a teacher as to research and comparison. What qualities pervade all literature, and make it literature;—this is the main problem of the literature class room. With regard to beautiful literature the question is, wherein consists its beauty. To enlarge upon the differences among poets is a commonplace of the lecturer and the essayist; and implies,—what usually does not exist,—a previous attainment of insight into the fundamental qualities that all poets have in common. Pope and Wordsworth are unlike enough to the most careless reader: but by virtue of some essence more recondite than their unlikeness they are both poets; and this common characteristic is the important entity that teaching in the higher education should seek to explain.

Of the importance of the study of rhythm and of rhythms,—that is, of rhythmic essence and of the concrete manifestations of it, I have already had occasion to speak. But no less important and interesting are the study of poetic diction and that of poetic motives. By his diction the poet gives his work elevation, remoteness from the cares, the worries, the pettinesses, of daily life. Horatio does not say,—'tis morning,—but

“Look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.”

Comus does not say,—last evening,—but

“What time the labored ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.”

Scott does not say,—servants get the dinner ready,—but

“Yeomen dight the woodland cheer.”

Diction, rhythm, thought-content,—these three elements of poetic expression,—are inextricably involved, and it takes all three to make poetry. Let a poet become the victim of a whim, as Wordsworth did at one period of his life, and reduce his dic-

tion to commonplace, under the delusion that by sacrificing his diction he is glorifying his philosophy, and we have such poems as Peter Bell and the Idiot Boy, poems which tell pathetic tales,—that is their thought content,—and will scan,—that is their rhythmic form,—but how powerless to please and stimulate. Yet Wordsworth, in his normal poetic vein, strained, like the rest, for a lofty diction. He could describe sunset as the time when “the crimson day in quietness withdraws”; and picture midnight as the time

“When the church-clock’s knell profound
To Time’s first step across the bound
Of midnight makes reply;
Time pressing on with starry crest,
To filial sleep upon the breast
Of dread eternity.”

Tennyson notably elaborates his diction, chooses his words with infinite research among the possibilities of speech, dreads commonplace as his worst foe. The movement of a clock is,—“every kiss of toothed wheels”. An exhortation to repress the lower instincts is,—

“Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.”

Chiefly by the magic of his diction Scott lifts us out of the here and the now, and transports us to the times and the scenes of heroic adventure. To his marvellous diction, for ever inimitable and unapproached, Shakespeare largely owes that transcendent elevation and dignity of manner by which he astonishes even the world of careless readers, who do not stay to perceive his perfect verse form, his unequalled insight into human nature. Think, on the other hand, of the eccentricities of the “metaphysical poets”, and even of the saintly George Herbert, who often surprise us with grovelling metaphors, and always shock our sense when they do so.

Open at any page you will your Shakespeare, your Milton, your Gray, your Coleridge, your Scott, your Shelley, your Keats, your Tennyson, and you come inevitably upon this strange culling of effective words and phrases, this invention of startling figures. This is the poet’s art of impressing our imaginations into his

service. Juliet insists that it is the nightingale, but Romeo knows it is the lark, and he must go, for "jocund day stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops" With such a magic touch the poet communicates his vision, and the vision is instantly ours, and we are with the immortal lovers, our feelings are wrought to the pitch of theirs.

Now this poetic diction is not an ornament or appendage to any conceivable more solid and basic substance, but is the very soul of the poetry, without which the poetry is not poetry, but chronicle, doomed to be neglected and forgotten. As a substantial entity in literature poetic diction deserves to be studied, its nature understood, its art fathomed.

This branch of poetics is to girls a fascinating study, provided it be set about in the right way,—that is by beginning with the actual literature, with the poems, and not with a theory or a definition. The books of rhetoric and literary history are an awful incubus on pedagogic aspirations. As apparatus multiplies, zeal wanes. I fear we have more tools than skill.

Another most interesting occupation for the literature class room is the discussion of the sources of poetic motive. What human interests play the largest part in furnishing the poets with their themes? It soon appears that certain themes are in their nature poetical and others are not. To consider why this difference exists, in what principles of human nature it is founded, is a necessary part of the higher study of literature. Supremely poetical themes are death, the future life, patriotism, self-sacrifice, parental, filial and conjugal love, the home, the aspects of nature, the song and the flight of birds, the work of farmers, shepherds, soldiers, sailors. Among the human passions try so to draw a line of demarcation as to leave on one side of it those passions that poetry may adopt, and on the other those which she must reject. Consider why it is that the sword, the spear, the shield; the scythe, the sickle, the flail; the mower, the reaper; the sheaf, the stack, the barn; the anchor, the oar, the helm, are constantly appearing in verse: while the ledger, the bank, the salary, the dividend, are strictly debarred from such society. Consider that drinking has its poetic aspects, and that revelry appears in the poetry of all ages, glorified with a score of standard epithets,—the flowing bowl, the brimming beaker; but that eating is a for-

bidden theme, and that the trencher can be named only for the sake of dishonor. Why is this? Why is it that prudential maxims, all-important in the conduct of life, are a base metal to poetry, worthy only of scorn? Consider the strange ideal character portrayed in Gray's "youth to fortune and to fame unknown", and compare with this apparently so imbecile creation Wordsworth's very similar figure drawn in the Poet's Epitaph.

The study even of poetry remains dry and profitless if we confine ourselves to its chronological annals, or even if we add to these annals the daintiest criticisms that were ever put into textbooks. But the study of poetry becomes full of interest and significance when we seek, though in the most rudimentary ways, to become acquainted with the great poetical ideals and motives. These ideals and motives do not change from age to age. They link together all the generations of men, and constitute the veritable spiritual unity of the race. To recognize and feel the prevalence of these ideals is the most vital duty of the teacher of literature.

Without the slightest purpose to disparage the chronological, or the evolutionary study of literature, the necessity of which I fully recognize as fundamental to all broad acquaintance with the subject, but which there is no need of vindicating, as it has always been held in full honor, I wish distinctly to deny the value, to adolescent minds, of much attention to literary criticism as an exercise introductory to the study of an author. In approaching an author, the young student should in all possible ways be led to entertain great expectations of him. Whoever reads to criticize and confute, the girl should be preserved from falling into that bad attitude. The fatal charm of lecturing, of talking with the field all to himself, beguiles the professorlet into epithet mongering; and girls will sit loyally and take notes, getting opinions to which they have no right, and which are very likely to be crude and wrong opinions. The girl needs no provision of ready made verdicts. What the girl needs is insight, power of intelligent appreciation, belief in great literary reputations, and the ability to perceive and enjoy, and so far as she can, to understand, their greatness. The conventional reviewer posture is the worst that the English teacher can assume. Fortunately, contemporary writing does not lie within the scope of school and college literary study,

and students can be advised to be very chary and nice in their choice of current reviewing.

One department of literature there is which has such perfect relation to the feminine tastes and instincts that it should, in any account of a literature course for girls, be made especially prominent. I mean sacred lyric poetry, or hymns. The most affecting verse in English literature is in its hymnody. Meant primarily to be sung, the hymn is, I think, better adapted for the feminine speaking voice. The hymn is simple, grave, penetrating. It goes to the soul, to the very penetralia of the emotions, and explores all the chambers of conscience, of aspiration, of hope. A hymn well read in a girls' school is always well listened to, and brings all hearts into unison. There is no other way so effectual of establishing the serious tone, in which the work of the school day should be begun, as the recitation of a perfect hymn. The hymn may be from the pen of Watts, Wesley, Cowper, Montgomery, Keble, Newman,—it matters not whence it comes, if it gives utterance to a human emotion. Hymns learned in youth and heard read and sung at divine service throughout life, come to form a bond that links together the years of man with natural piety. They establish a guarantee of steadfastness of faith and character, and lay the foundation for the realization of the poet's assurance to a young lady,—

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave;
But an old age, serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

Into this brief paper, whose theme suggests only sweetness and light, I have had to admit some touches of polemic acidity, rightly to express my attitude towards the institutions and customs in which we are imbedded. For I am not a seer: my theory has been worked out under the chafing of the harness. The theorist of a generation ago saw the educational system of the land, that it was good; this need of man as a social being was met by this study, and this other need by this other study; and so on, till we saw that the adjustment was perfect. But within the bosom of the time dwelt the seeds of change. What the future was going

to evolve even the seer could not see. In our social system resides a native power to call into existence the instruments it needs for its educative purposes. These appear in response to a consciousness of want which is not the consciousness of the theoretic leaders of education. While the development goes on, the function of the philosopher is simply to stand by and make comments.

And if I, who am not a philosopher, but a work-a-day teacher, may make my comment on the chief of the great educational movements of this generation,—the movement in behalf of the higher education of women,—I will say that the success of the women in realizing their hopes has been already so complete that they should feel themselves superior to the ambition to shape for themselves an education identical in its forms and aims with what the past bequeathes to us as the higher education for men. Women come to their rights just at the moment when all education is undergoing transformation. In this very fact they find their opportunity. The women should be above imitating; for there is nothing now so standard, so venerable, as to deserve their homage. I regret that women should watch men's class rooms to find models for themselves. They can do better.

For the women to copy men's examinations and competitions, especially such competitive schemes as have developed themselves in the upper education of England, is, it seems to me, to go altogether and disastrously wrong. Of course the women can compete with the men on even terms, and surpass them half of the time. That may be henceforth assumed as needing no assertion. Proofs of intellectual equality with the other sex and of perfect ability to compete with them in the arena of strife have become an old story. What I urge is that women, in their education, be exhorted to rise above competition with each other.

I know very well how unwilling teachers are even to try to conceive an education without examinations. But examinations are a modern innovation, and education is an ancient art. Once upon a time examinations came up; and so, some happy day, they may go down. I find my girls do best when relieved of all prospect of examination. All-important in education is the motive with which students work. Simply to spur them to work hard is a coarse method that can have in view only the overcoming of indolence. Indolence, if it exist, is an obstacle to success; but if

you simply dispel the indolence, and induce activity, the worth of this activity is still problematical; and if you use examinations as your stimulus, the examinations probably become and remain the be-all and end-all of the activity. Girls are peculiarly susceptible of the higher motives. The attainment of rank or degree is a low motive. You cannot employ the low motive and at the same time enjoy perfect freedom to use the high motive.

So deeply rooted in the pedagogic consciousness is this vice of perpetual examining, marking and ranking, that you may even see teachers and superintendents estimate the value of studies and school procedures by their examinability. Under the long scholastic regimen of marks even the feminine heart hardens. Were there not infinite compensations in the elasticity of adolescence and also in the beautiful complaisance which woman never outlives, the case of our youth would be indeed pitiful. The trend of opinion is manifestly towards deposing the idol of examinations. Many teachers are doing the perfunctory old homage under all sorts of mental reservations. You may see teachers who cannot act up to a belief that it is a custom more honored in the breach than in the observance, in whom, however, discretion hath so far fought with nature, that, with one auspicious and one dropping eye, they hold examinations, but implore their pupils not to think anything of them,—they mark, but expatiate on the baseness of caring anything about marks. Thus are we enacting our little educational play, which seems, at first glance, altogether a comedy, but is, in reality, a melancholy tragedy.

Many writers on education have treated emulation as a motive. For men the question has oftenest been settled with the confession that it is not possible to render a single homage to Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, but that she must divide our worship with Eris, the goddess of strife. For women this decision is utterly wrong. No part of a girl's happiness lies in the vanquishing of opponents. Her glory is not that she loves to excel her companions, but that she loves the things that are excellent.

S. Thurber

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